

3 Common Misconceptions About Virtualization — and the Surprising Truth

How VMware Can Add Value at Every Stage of Your Virtualization Journey

As the potential cost savings and flexibility benefits of virtualization become increasingly well known, more and more companies are migrating — or have already moved — to virtualized IT environments. But as these companies assess the virtualization market, they may be getting some misinformation that I'd like to help clear up. During my time at VMware, I've heard three particularly common virtualization misconceptions: that virtualization jeopardizes performance, that virtualization is only useful for server consolidation, and that the benefits of virtualization don't span across the board. Let's take a closer look at each.

Myth #1: Virtualization Jeopardizes Performance

Customers are often concerned that, if they embrace virtualization, they will see a noticeable drop in performance. This misconception does have a grain of truth in it; companies do sometimes see a performance drop when they run multiple virtual machines simultaneously. But there are also virtualization technologies that can counter this.

For example, VMware technology is designed to help companies get the most out of their IT hardware resources through performance-enhancing technologies,

virtualization benchmarking tools, and troubleshooting advice. At VMware, the majority of our customers have been surprised to learn that we can scale up to meet even the most demanding workloads. For example, Fujitsu was able to scale its system on vSphere up to 16,000 SAP SD benchmark users and over 87,000 SAPs.¹

Myth #2: Virtualization Is Only Useful for Server Consolidation

While virtualization technology is well known for its server consolidation capabilities, many companies don't realize that it can be used for other purposes, such as disaster recovery. I'm continually shocked to find that many companies don't have a disaster recovery solution in place for their physical servers, so this virtualization capability can be a real boon. And while traditional disaster recovery solutions are often costly, complex, and tedious to test, virtualized solutions can be much simpler to implement.

For example, our customers are often amazed at how easily vSphere, our virtualization platform, can plug into their architecture to provide a disaster recovery

¹ See the full results of this SAP SD Standard Application Benchmark at www.vmware.com/solutions/partners/alliances/sap.html. This benchmark was performed on VMware ESX Server 4.0.



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VMware's Philosophy: Delivering SAP as a Service

"We let it manage itself.... The [virtual] machines can move around at machine speed; **humans don't have to get in the way**. That's a huge advantage."

— *The administrative director of business and operational services for a Florida public school district*

This statement gets to the heart of VMware's core objective — to deliver SAP as a service through a self-managed virtual infrastructure. In this way, virtualization and cloud offerings from VMware and its partners are dedicated to empowering companies to use SAP as a service, on demand, whether on premise or in the cloud, and thus gain more efficiency, agility, and control while no longer having to manage their computing infrastructure themselves.

solution that lets them recover any machine, not just specific duplicate hardware. This greatly reduces hardware costs and maintenance budgets, and lowers the complexity of maintaining a backup site. Plus, testing is simple since companies can execute nondisruptive disaster recovery tests using existing resources.

Myth #3: The Benefits of Virtualization Don't Span Across the Board

This misconception has three angles. First, many companies believe that virtualization will only add value during the initial development stage of their SAP infrastructure's life cycle. In reality, virtualization adds value — and saves companies money — in every key phase of this life cycle, touching everyone from the director of IT, to the CIO, to the lines of business.

Second, the “across-the-board” misconception comes from the assumption that virtualization should be limited to only a handful of simpler applications. SAP customers, however, have been surprised to learn that VMware virtualization technology works for all the business-critical applications they use, including their SAP solutions.

Third, many companies believe that virtualization service providers can only help customers that are far along, or at least at a certain maturity level, in their virtualization journey. VMware, on the other hand, helps customers at *any* stage — from planning an investment to moving from test and development environments to a full-blown private cloud. We even work with customers that haven't virtualized anything yet and are simply contemplating the move.

Shattering the Myths: Success with Virtualization at a Florida School District

It's been three years since the largest school district in Florida purchased a physical server. This virtualization

pioneer's success with VMware software not only exemplifies the multi-layered value of virtualization, but also disproves all three of the above misconceptions:²

- **Myth #1, disproven:** This public school district runs 892 virtual machines — some 120 for SAP alone — on VMware vSphere. Even with all those virtual machines, performance is better than ever. VMware Distributed Resource Scheduler helps scale the school district's applications to dynamically meet changing loads, and VMware High Availability and VMware Fault Tolerance protect applications from downtime, without the complexity of conventional clustering.
- **Myth #2, disproven:** Since the district lies in a hurricane zone, it requires robust disaster protection and recovery capabilities for its computing infrastructure. In fact, the school district would never have been able to virtualize its infrastructure at all if its virtualization technology didn't provide disaster recovery support. Fortunately, VMware has a platform for disaster recovery called Site Recovery Manager (SRM), which automates disaster recovery plans when needed. Additionally, SRM allows users to test plans without impacting the production environment, so companies know recovery scenarios will work before disaster strikes.
- **Myth #3, disproven:** For this school district, the benefits of virtualization are truly across-the-board. Not only did it deploy VMware technology that touches all of its business-critical applications, including SAP and Microsoft applications, but it also started with a small-footprint virtualization implementation and then expanded to virtualize its mission-critical SAP solutions in production.

Additional benefits at the district include:

- Three-year ROI of 116%
- Capital cost savings of US\$2.2 million
- Carbon emission reductions equivalent to taking 63 cars off the road

Take Action

To learn more about how VMware can help your company on its virtualization journey, no matter where you are on it, visit www.vmware.com/sap. ■

² See <http://bit.ly/VMware-success>.

New in Virtualization: VMware ThinApp

A new, quick win in the world of virtualization is VMware ThinApp — a solution for agentless application virtualization that can accelerate application deployment and simplify application migration. With VMware ThinApp, applications are packaged into single deployment points, which are block streamed to the user or sent as a single MSI file that can be installed. These packages run completely isolated from each other and the operating system for conflict-free execution on end-point devices. To learn more, visit www.vmware.com/products/thinapp.